

I think we all may learn a most important lesson from the Hebert Committee proceedings. This Committee, at its first session, was antagonistic towards civil defense. However, they did what few of our people really have done. They took time to hear the complete story. After this, they became the greatest ambassadors in the nation for shelters and home-front preparedness. This lesson can carry over to you and me. If we really tell the story to our people, they will also become ambassadors of goodwill for us. A word of caution: We must learn our lessons well so that we can really be prepared to give and take in any discussion concerning our work. Few things generate as much heat as civil defense.

All of us here this morning have a tremendous task. We must proceed with all the facilities and "knowhow" at our command to expedite the stocking of the shelters. It is my earnest wish that this phase of the program be completed within the next few months. I believe that we can achieve this goal if we apply our energies to the task. Further, we should expedite the program of shelter training managers and staff. We have merely scratched the surface on this portion of our training program. It is vital to public safety that such trained personnel be available in the event of emergency. The State Civil Defense Agency, and in particular its training staff, stands ready to aid in this training. I urge that you avail yourselves of this help. There are, of course, many other training programs in existence and it seems to me that in other related fields of civil defense, we must proceed with all possible speed.

New words are appearing in our civil defense language. Shelter utilization is one that seems of great importance. With the many shelters that we already have and the many more that we hope to have, we must plan for their use. People must be told where to go and what to do in the event of attack. Perhaps the most important thing of all is to plan now as to how, when, and where we will make the best use of federal financial assistance if the shelter bill passes the Senate and is signed into law.

I know full well that I have reviewed in part here today matters about which you already know. I do this because I desire to make it crystal clear that I, as the Governor of Maryland, have complete confidence in, and support fully, the civil defense program. We have an excellent program in our State. We must not be deterred by unfounded opposition and destructive criticism. The civil defense eyes of the nation are on Maryland. To fail is to make easier the aims of our enemies abroad.